

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method for updating network appliances, comprising:
determining an urgent update;
creating an urgent update notification (UUN) associated with the urgent update;
sending the UUN to the network appliances as messages;
receiving a reply to the UUN from at least one of the network appliances; and
providing the urgent update to the at least one of the network appliances in response to the reply.
2. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein sending the UUN to the network appliances as messages further comprises sending the messages through specific message ports of the network appliances.
3. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 2, wherein at least one of the network appliances is a message protector configured to protect messages of a specific protocol, and wherein at least one of the messages is conformed to that specific protocol and at least one of the message ports is dedicated to that protocol.
4. (Original) The method of Claim 3, wherein at least one of the messages is a SMTP conformed message and at least one of the message ports is port 25.
5. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein each message includes a special format that distinguishes it from normal messages.
6. (Original) The method of Claim 3, wherein the special format includes at least one of a special header, a special subject line, and special content in the body of the message.

7. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein providing the urgent update to the network appliances comprises enabling the network appliances to obtain a log that includes the urgent update.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, further comprising:
collecting the IP addresses of the network appliances when the network appliances establish a connection to obtain updates; and
storing the IP addresses in a log.

9. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 8, further comprising removing out-of-date IP addresses from the log.

10. (Original) The method of Claim 9, wherein sending the UUN to the network appliances comprises sending a message with the UUN to each IP address in the log.

11. (Original) The method of Claim 10, wherein the IP address is up-to-date.

12. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the method is operable on at least one of a server, a network appliance, and a dedicated platform.

13. (Currently Amended) A method for obtaining updates, comprising:
receiving a message;
in response to determining that the message includes an UUN associated with an urgent update,
~~immediately establishing a connection with a server;~~
~~obtaining pulling the urgent update from the server; and~~
~~installing the urgent update.~~

14. (Original) The method of Claim 13, wherein the message conforms to a specific protocol and is received through a message port dedicated to that protocol.

15. (Original) The method of Claim 14, wherein the protocol includes a SMTP protocol and the message port includes port 25.

16. (Original) The method of Claim 13, wherein the message includes a special format that distinguishes it from normal messages.

17. (Original) The method of Claim 16, wherein determining that the message includes a UUN comprises detecting the special format.

18. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 16, wherein obtaining pulling the urgent update from the server comprises obtaining a log that includes the urgent update.

19. (Original) The method of Claim 16, further comprising obtaining updates from the server at pre-determined intervals.

20. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the method is operable on at least one of a server, a network appliance, a router, a switch, and a firewall.

21. (Currently Amended) A system for managing a network, comprising:

an update server configured to determine updates and to provide the updates to network appliances, the update servers being further configured to determine an update that is urgent and to send an UUN urgent update notification (UUN) about the urgent update to each network appliance; and

a network appliance configured to periodically obtain updates from the update server, the network appliance being further configured to receive from the update server an UUN associated

with an urgent update and to ~~immediately obtain pull~~ the urgent ~~updates update~~ from the update server in response to the received UUN.

22. (Original) The system of Claim 21, wherein the update server is further configured to collect IP addresses of the network appliances in conjunction with periodic update requests, store the IP addresses in a log, and remove an IP address from the log when the IP address is out-of-date.

23. (Original) The system of Claim 21, wherein the update server is further configured to send the UUN as a message to each network appliance through a specific message port.

24. (Original) The system of Claim 21, wherein the update server is further configured to enable the network appliances to connect to the update server and to obtain updates.

25. (Original) The system of Claim 24, wherein the update server is further configured to determine IP addresses associated with the network appliances when the network appliances connect to the update server for updates.

26. (Original) The system of Claim 25, wherein the update server is further configured to send the UUN to the IP addresses.

27. (Original) The system of Claim 21, wherein the update server is further configured to maintain a log that includes the updates.

28. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 21, wherein the network appliance configured to access the log to obtain the updates.

29. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for providing updates to network appliances, comprising:

means for determining an urgent update;

means for creating an UUN associated with the urgent update;
means for collecting and maintaining IP addresses of the network appliances;
means for sending the UUN to the network appliances as messages;
means for receiving a reply to the UUN from at least one of the network appliances; and
means for providing the urgent update to the at least one of the network appliances in response to the reply.

30. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for obtaining updates, comprising:

means for receiving a message;
means for determining when the message includes an UUN associated with an urgent update,
means for establishing a connection with a server in response to a determination that the message includes an UUN associated with an urgent update;
means for obtaining pulling the urgent update from the server; and
means for installing the urgent update.

31. (Currently Amended) A network appliance, comprising:

a central processing unit; and
at least one data storage;
wherein the central processing unit and the at least one data storage are configured to enable the network appliance to receive a message, determine if the message includes an UUN associated with an urgent update, establish a connection with a server and request the urgent update from the server in response to a determination that the message includes an UUN associated with an urgent update, obtain receive the urgent update from the server, and install the urgent update.

32. (Previously Presented) The network appliance of Claim 31, wherein:

the central processing unit and the at least one data storage are configured to enable the network appliance to detect and remove exploits from messages; and
the urgent update comprises software for execution by the network appliance.

33. (Previously Presented) The network appliance of Claim 32, wherein the network appliance comprises a message port arranged to receive messages, including messages comprising an UUN.

34. (Currently Amended) The network appliance of Claim 31, wherein the central processing unit and the at least one data storage are configured to determine if the message includes an UUN associated with ~~a-n~~ an urgent update, based on a format of the message.

35. (Currently Amended) An update server, comprising:

a central processing unit; and
at least one data storage;

wherein the central processing unit and the at least one data storage are configured to enable the update server to determine an urgent update, create an UUN associated with the urgent update, collect and maintain IP addresses of the network appliances, send the UUN to the network appliances as messages, receive a reply to the UUN from at least one of the network appliances, and provide the urgent update to the at least one of the network appliances in response to messages generated by the network appliances based on the UUN the reply.

36. (Previously Presented) The update server of Claim 35, wherein the central processing unit and the at least one data storage are configured to enable the update server to collect IP addresses of the network appliances based on the messages generated by the network appliances, store the collected IP addresses, and remove out-of-date IP addresses from the at least one data storage.

37. (Previously Presented) The update server of Claim 35, wherein the urgent update comprises software for execution by the network appliances.